

WHAT IS EARLY VOTING?

Early voting was created to allow Illinois voters cast a ballot prior to Election Day without having to provide a reason or an excuse for wanting to vote early.

HOW EARLY CAN PEOPLE VOTE?

Registered voters can vote early during the 22nd day through the 5th day preceding an election.

WHEN IS THE ELECTION?

The primary election is March 21, 2006. Therefore, early voting will begin February 27 and end March 16.

The general election is November 7, 2006. Therefore, early voting will begin October 16 and end November 2.

WHERE CAN PEOPLE VOTE?

Election authorities across the state will identify convenient locations where registered voters can vote early. In almost all cases, the sites will be different from the voters' regular polling place. Notice of the sites will be announced by election authorities.

For details, contact your election authority or visit www.elections.il.gov.

WHO AUTHORIZED EARLY VOTING?

The Illinois General Assembly approved House Bill 1968 in 2005, and it was signed into law as Public Act 94-0645.

WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THE LAW?

A major reason for the new law is to encourage greater participation in the election. People who travel for business, work long hours or are otherwise inconvenienced by the hours the polls are open may find it easier to vote early.

DO OTHER STATES ALLOW EARLY VOTING?

Yes. Approximately 35 states have some form of early voting. In some states that have experience in early voting, the number of ballots cast early is significant.

IS ABSENTEE VOTING STILL ALLOWED?

Yes. Absentee voting laws remain in place.

Persons who desire an absentee ballot should contact their election authority for an application or for more information.

WHAT ARE THE SAFEGUARDS AGAINST VOTER FRAUD?

Voters casting an early ballot must display valid identification such as a current driver's license, a state-issued ID card or another government-issued ID with a photograph.

The requirement of photo identification for an early voter is stricter than any identification requirement for a person casting a ballot at their polling place on Election Day.

The law prohibits a person who voted during the early voting period from voting at the polls on Election Day.

The votes cast during the early voting period will not be counted until after the polls close on Election Day.

ARE POLLWATCHERS ALLOWED AT EARLY VOTING SITES?

Yes. Like at the regular polling place on Election Day, pollwatchers may be appointed to observe early voting by personal appearance at each permanent and temporary polling place where early voting is conducted.

IS ELECTIONEERING ALLOWED AT EARLY VOTING SITES?

No. Electioneering is prohibited at the early voting site and a campaign-free zone will be established like it is at the polling place on Election Day.



For more information on early voting or other election laws and procedures, contact your election authority or visit the Board's Website www.elections.il.gov.

EARLY VOTING

New Option For Illinois Voters In The 2006 Elections

THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

A primary goal of the State Board of Elections is to help bring about greater understanding and participation in the electoral process.

The State Board works closely with election authorities in all regions of the State.

Elections are administered locally by the State's 110 election authorities. These are the county clerks in 101 counties, one county election commission and eight municipal election commissions.

As part of their many responsibilities, election authorities conduct local voter registration programs, train election judges, find polling places, prepare ballots, oversee Election Day activities and supervise the vote count.

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This pamphlet provides general information regarding a new State law that affects all eligible voters in Illinois.